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THE HUMBLE
PETITION
OF THE
COMMISSIONERS
OF THE
GENERALL ASSEMBLY
TO THE
KINGS MAJESTY.

Their Declaration sent to the Parlia-
ment of ENGLAND.

Their Letter to some Brethren of the
Ministry there.

And their Commission to their Brother
Master *Alexander Henderson*,
January 1643.



EDINBURGH,

Printed by *Evan Tyler*, Printer to the Kings
most Excellent Majestie. 1643.

THE
PETITION
OF THE
COMMISSIONERS
OF THE
LANDS AND REVENUE
TO THE
HIS MAJESTY

IN THE
MATTER OF THE
LANDS AND REVENUE
COMMISSIONERS
OF THE
LANDS AND REVENUE
TO THE
HIS MAJESTY



IN WITNESS WHEREOF
We have hereunto set our hands and seals
at the City of London, this 10th day of May 1861.

To the Kings most excellent Majesty.

*The humble Petition of the Commissioners of the Generall
Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, from their
meeting at Edinburgh, January 4. 1643.*



Ur silence and ceasing to present before Your Majesty our humble thoughts and desires at this time of common danger to Religion, to Your Majesties sacred Person, Your Crown, and Posteritie, and to all Your Majesties Dominions, were impiety against God, unthankfulnes and disloyalty against Your Majesty, an indirect approbation and hardning of the adversaries of Truth and Peace in their wicked wayes, and a cruelty against our Brethren, lying in such depths of affliction and anguish of spirit; any one of which crimes were in us, above all others most inexcusable, and would prove us most unworthie of the trust committed unto us. The flame of this common combustion hath almost devoured Ireland, is now wasting the Kingdome of England, & we cannot tell how soon it shal enter upon our selves, & set this Your Majesties most ancient and native Kingdome on fire: If in this wofull case and lamentable condition of Your Majesties Dominions all others should be silent, it becometh us to speak; and if our tongues and pens should cease, our consciences within us would cry out, and the stones in the streets would answer us.

Our great grief and apprehension of danger, is not a little encreased, partly by the insolencie and presumption of Papists and others disaffected to the Reformation of Religion, who although for their number and power, they be not considerable amongst us; yet through the successe

of the Popish party in Ireland , and the hopes they conceive of the prevailing power of Popish Armies , and the Prelaticall Faction in England, they have of late taken spirits, and begun to speak big words against the Reformation of Religion, and the Work of God in this Land; and partly and more principally, that a chief praise of the Protestant Religion, and thereby our not vain, but just gloriation, is by the publick Declaration of the Earle of Newcastle, Generall of Your Majesties Forces in the Northern parts, and nearest unto us, transferred unto Papists; who although they be sworn enemies unto Kings, and be as infamous for their Treasons and Conspiracies against Princes and Rulers, as for their known Idolatrie and spirituall Tyrannie; yet are they openly declared to be, not good Subjects, or better Subjects, but far better Subjects then Protestants; which is a new and foul disparagement of the reformed Religion, a notable injurie to Your Majesty in Your Honour, a sensible reflection upon the whole Body of this Kingdome , which is impatient that any Subjects, but abhorreth, and extremely disdaineth that Papists, who refuse to take the Oath of Allegiance, should be compared with them in allegiance and fidelitie; and, which as a strange doctrine , from the mouth or pen of professed Protestants, wil suffer an hard construction from all the Reformed Kirks.

We therefore Your Majesties most humble and loving Subjects, upon these and the like considerations, do humbly intreat , That Your Majesty may be pleased in Your Princely wisdom, First to consider, That the intentions of Papists, directed by the principles of their Profession, are no other , then they have been from the beginning, even to build their Babel, and to set up their execrable Idolatry, and Antichristian Tyrannie in all Your Majesties

Domini-

Dominions, to change the Face of Your two Kingdomes of Scotland and England, into the similitude of miserable Ireland, which is more bitter to the people of God, Your Majesties good Subjects, to think upon, than death : And whatsoever their present pretences be for the defence of Your Majesties Person and Authoritie ; yet in the end by their arms and power, with a displayed banner, to bring that to passe against Your Royall Person and Posterity, which the fifth of November, never to be forgotten , was not able by their subtile and under-mining treason to produce ; Or which will be their greatest mercy, to reduce Your Majesty, and Your Kingdomes, to the base and unnaturall slavery of their Monarch the Pope : And next , that Your Majesty upon this undeniable evidence , may timously and speedily apply Your Royall Authority for dis-banding their Forces, suppressing their Power , and disappointing their bloody and mercilesse projects. And for this end we are with greater earnestnes than before , constrained to fall down again before Your Majesty, and in all humility to renew the Supplication of the late Generall Assembly, and our own former Petition in their name, for unity of Religion, and for uniformity of Church-government in all Your Majesties Dominions : And to this effect for a meeting of sound Divines to be held in England, unto which according to the desire of Your Majesties Parliament, some Commissioners may be sent from this Kirk, that in all points to be proponed and debated, there may be the greater consent and harmonie.

We take the boldnes to be the more instant in this our humble desire, because it concerneth the Lord Jesus Christ so much in his glory, your Majesty in your honor, the Kirk of England which we ought to tender as our own bowels, & whose reformation is more dear to us, than our lives,

in her happineſſe , and the Kirk of Scotland in her purity and peace : Former experience, and daily ſenſe teaching us, that without the Reformation of the Kirk of England, there is no hope nor poſſibilitie of the continuance of Reformation here.

The Lord of Heaven and Earth , whoſe Vicegerent Your Maſteſty is, calleth for this great Work of Reformation at Your hands, and the preſent commotions and troubles of Your Maſteſties Dominions , are either preparations in the mercy of God , for this bleſſed Reformation and unity in Religion, which is the deſire, prayer, and expectation of all Your Maſteſties good Subjects in this Kingdome , Or, which they tremble to think upon , and earneſtly deprecate, are in the juſtice of God for the abuſe of the Goſpel, the tolerating of Idolatry and Superſtition againſt ſo clear a light, and not acknowledging the day of viſitation ; The beginnings of ſuch a dolefull deſolation, as no policie or power of man, ſhal be able to prevent, and as ſhall make Your Maſteſties Kingdomes within a ſhort time as miſerable as now they may be happy by a Reformation of Religion. God forbid, that while the Houſes of Parliament do profeſſe their deſire of the Reformation of Religion in a peaceable and Parliamentarie way , and paſſe their Bills for that end in the particulars, That Your Maſteſty, the Nurſe-father of the Kirk of Chriſt, to whoſe care the cuſtody and vindication of Religion doth principally belong , ſhould to the provoking of the anger of God , the ſtopping of the influence of ſo many bleſſings from Heaven, & the grieving of the hearts of all the godly, fruſtrate our expectation, make our hopes aſhamed, and hazard the loſſe of the hearts of all Your good People, which next unto the truth and unity of Religion, and the ſafety of Your Kingdomes , are willing to hazard their
lives,

lives, and spend their blood for Your Majesties honour and happinesse.

We are not ignorant that the Work is great, the difficulties and impediments be many, and that there be both Mountains and Lyons in the way. The strongest lett, till it be taken out of the way, is the Mountain of Prelacie: And no wonder, if Your Majestie consider how many Papists, and Popishly affected, have for a long time found peace and ease under the shadow thereof; How many of the Prelaticall Faction have thereby their life and being; How many profane & worldly men do fear the yoke of Christ, and are unwilling to submit themselves to the obedience of the Gospel; And how many there be, whose eyes are dazzled with the externall pomp and glory of the Kirk, whose mindes are mis-carried with a conceit of the governing the Kirk by the rules of humane Policy, & whose hearts are affrighted with the apprehension of the dangerous consequences which may ensue upon alterations. But when Your Majestie in Your Princely and religious wisdom, shall remember from the Records of former times, how against the gates of hell, the force & fraud of worldly and wicked men, and all Panick fears of danger, the Christian Religion was first planted, and the Christian Kirks thereafter reformed, & from the condition of the present times, how many from the experience of the tyranny of Prelates, are afraid to discover themselves, lest they be revenged upon them hereafter: Whereas Prelacie being removed, they would openly professe what they are, & joyn with others in the way of Reformation; All obstacles and difficulties shall be but matter of the manifestation of the power of God, the principall worker, and the means of the greater glory to Your Majestie the prime Instrument.

The intermixture of the government of Prelates with
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the Civill State, mentioned in Your Majesties Answer to our former Petition, being taken away, and the right Government by Assemblies, which is to be seen in all the Reformed Kirks, and wherein the agreement will be easie, being settled; The Kirk and Religion will be more pure and free of mixture, and the Civill Government more sound and firme; That Government of the Kirk, must sute best with the Civill State, and be most usefull for Kings and Kingdomes, which is best warranted by G O D, by whom Kings do raigne, and Kingdomes are established; Nor can a Reformation be expected in the Common and ordinary way, expressed also in Your Majesties Answer. The wisest and most Religious Princes have found it impossible, and implying a repugnancie, since the persons to be reformed, and the Reformers, must be diverse, and the way of Reformation must be different from the corrupt way, by which defections of Kirk-men, and corruptions in doctrine, worship, & Government have entered into the Kirk. Suffer us therefore (Dread Sovereigne) to renew our Petitions for this unity of Religion, and uniformity of Kirk-government, and for a meeting of sound Divines of both Kingdomes, who may prepare matters for Your Majesties view, and for the examination and approbation of more full Assemblies.

The Nationall Assembly of this Kirk, from which we have our Commission, did promise in their thanksgiving for the many favours expressed in Your Majesties Letter, their best endeavours to keep the people under their charge, in unity and peace, and in loyalty and obedience to Your Majestie and Your Laws, which we confesse is a duty well beseeming the preachers of the Gospel: But we cannot conceale, how much both Pastors and People are grieved and disquieted with the late reports of
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the successe, boldnes, and strength of Popish forces in Ireland and England, and how much danger from the power of so malicious & bloody Enemies, is apprehended to the Religion & peace of this Kirk & Kingdome, conceived by them to be the spring whence have issued all their calamities and miseries: Which we humbly remonstrate to Your Majesty, as a necessity requiring a General Assembly, & do earnestly supplicate for the presence and assistance of Your Majesties Commissioner at the day to be appointed, That by universall consent of the whole Kirk, the best course may be taken for the preservation of Religion, and for the averting of the great wrath which they conceive to be imminent to this Kingdome.

If it shall please the Lord, in whose hand is the heart of the King, as the rivers of waters to turn it whithersoever he will, to incline Your Majesties heart, to this through Reformation, no more to tolerate the Masse, or any part of Romish superstition or Tyrannie, and to command that all good means be used for the conversion of Your Princely consort the Queens Majesty, which is also the humble desire of this whole Kirk and Kingdome, Your joynt comforts shall be multiplied above the dayes of Your affliction, to Your incredible joy, Your glory shall shine in brightnesse above all Your Royall Progenitors, to the Admiration of the World, and the terrour of Your Enemies; And Your Kingdomes so far abound in Righteousnesse, Peace, and Prosperity above all that hath been in former Generations, that they shall say; *It is good for us that we have been afflicted.*


A. Ker Cler. Commiss. Gen. Ass.

B

To

TO THE HONOURABLE HOUSES
of the Parliament of ENGLAND.

The Declaration of the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of SCOTLAND, from their meeting at Edinburgh. Jan. 4. 1643.

 He weighty charge and trust put upon us by the Generall Assembly of this Kirk, hath given us the boldnesse, in this time of so great danger to Religion, to His Majesties Person, Crown, and Posteritie, & to all His Majesties Dominions, through the insolencie and prevailing power of Papists and the Prelaticall partie, to represent unto His Majestie by supplication, our humble thoughts and desires for a speedy remedy; By disbanding all Papists out of His Army; by calling an Assemblie of godly and sound Divines, unto which some of the Commissioners may be sent from the Kirk of Scotland, that by the blessing of GOD upon their labours, the so much desired unity in Religion and Kirk-government, may be brought about and settled in both Kingdomes; and by the faithful using of all good means for the Conversion of the Queens Majestie to the profession and practice of the true reformed Religion, which we conceive a principall part of the remedie.

This Kirk and Kingdome hath the sympathie and feares, but the Houses of Parliament, and the Kingdome of England have the sufferings and sense of these evils; We are in the danger, they in the distresse; The miseries are imminent to us, but incumbent upon them: And therefore the Commissioners of the Assembly do only represent their Brotherly and Christian fellow-feeling of the present condition of that Kingdome, and their feares ere it be long, unlesse the mercifull and mighty GOD prevent it by his gracious providence, of the like calamities


ties unto themselves, Together with their earnest prayers for Englands deliverance and their own safety : And do earnestly intreat, that the Parliament may be pleased for their part, and so much as in them lyeth, speedily to apply the fore-named Remedies, by disbanding Papists, if any be in their Armies, as is alledged in diverse Declarations; by the full manifestation and constant prosecution of their desires of unitie in Religion and Kirk-government; by their instant and uncessant dealing with His Majestie for calling such an Assembly of Divines, & by their serious thoughts and endeavours about the Queen her conversion, that the high provocation of Idolatrie may no more be tolerated in the land: For which ends the Commissioners of the Assembly have sent up for the present with the Lord Chancellor, and others from the Commissioners for conserving of peace, one of their number, a beloved and faithfull brother M^r *Alexander Henderson*, faithfully & fully to expresse their meaning in the particulars, so far as the wisdom of the Parliament shall judge it convenient to require or demand, and to make report to themselves, and unto the General Assembly (which is to be called upon the occasion of the present exigence and necessity through the danger of Religion) of the principall letts and hinderances of Reformation and unity in Religion, and where the work doth stay. As they do above all other things desire, that against all tentations and opposition, whatsoever may promote or conduce for this blessed Reformation, may from the zeal and by the wisdom of the Houses of Parliament be diligently gone about, without waiting for a more settled condition of the State; so do they nothing doubt but this being done, wrath shall be turned away from the Realme, the brightnesse of the presence of God, accompanying the Reformation of Religion, shall scatter all the clouds of dis-

ferences betwixt His Majestie and them , and His powerfull providence shall both incline the Kings heart to the same Reformation, and to the establishing of their Civill Liberties and Laws , and move the Houses of Parliament after a speciall manner and in all cheerfulness to manifest their tender and dutifull care of His Majesties sacred Person, and of His Royall Greatnesse and Authority , as a principall mean of the Greatnesse and Prosperity of that, and other His Majesties Kingdomes , that all by-past miseries being buried in oblivion, and the present distempers being perfectly cured , the Island of Britain may be an holy and happy Land, wherein G O D may be served according to His Word , the King obeyed according to His Laws, and the people live a quiet and peaceable life in all godlinesse and honesty , to the Admiration of the World, the envy of all wicked and Antichristian enemies, and to the comfort of all that love the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. Ker Cler. Commiss. Gen. Ass.

The Letter of the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly, direct to the right reverend their well-known and much approved Brethren of the Ministry of the Kirk of *England*.

Right reverend and dear Brethren,

 Ur earnest & uncessant desires of unity in Religion, the present distresse of England & Ireland, the danger to Religion in all His M^{ties} Dominions, & the fears we have of an universal combustion, universally deserved by our not knowing the time of our visitation, & the things which belong unto our peace, have constrained us with greater liberty then formerly, to sollicite his M^{ty} by our supplication, & the honorable houses of Parliament by our Declaration, which we have sent by
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the hand of our reverend Brother , and much approved Commissioner, Master *Alexander Henderson* , who will also make known to you our care and diligence to discover and remove such letts and hinderances of the Peace and Union of the two Kingdomes, as by the subtiltie and malignancie of some few bad Instruments have been cast in the way , that this whole Kirk and Kingdome may be intirely kept in the prosecution of their desires of civill peace and religious unity, wherein (by the mercy of God) we have the happinesse that the Lords of Privie Council, and the Commissioners for conserving the Peace betwixt the two Kingdomes , have not denyed their honourable help and assistance. Your present sufferings, wherein wee your Brethren cannot but have our fellow-feeling , and the late experience of somewhat the like among our selves, may teach us both , that Satan and his instruments , in whom he now worketh, are in a rage at the Reformation of Religion; nor is it any new or strange thing, that a time of Reformation be a time of trouble and difficultie : But your comfort and ours is, that the Arm of the Lord is not shortned, and that he who is in us, is stronger than he who is in the world. We make no question of your vigilancie, circumspection and faithfulness, & that no present nor future opposition will prevail so far , as to make you either more remisse in your intentions and desires of ordering all things in the House of the God of Heaven , according to his own will & commandment, or so much as to lay aside so great & necessary a Work in expectation of a fitter opportunity, & a more peaceable and convenient season. We are very confident, that ye wil be stedfast and unmoveable, alwaies abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know your work is not in vain in the Lord. We for our part shall , through the Lords assistance by our prayers,

with Fasting and Humiliation, and by our best endeavours be helpers together for the wished end. At the first Reformation of Religion in this Land, a very small number of Ministers, without the help, and with the contradiction of the world, through the mighty presence, and blessing of God upon their weak labours, brought the Work at last to perfection: And in the beginnings of our late Reformation, when we were assembled at Glasgow against the Prelacie, the Ceremonies and Service-book, a great part of the Assembly intended no such alteration in the Form of Worship and Kirk-government, as they were moved unanimously to consent unto in the end. When the time of Reformation cometh, the wisdom and spirit of God in his servants, cannot be resisted by the wit and power of man. What although ye should sowe, and the Posteritie reap? Hath not the Lord sent both you and us to reap that whereon neither of us bestowed any labour? other men laboured, and we are entred into their labours. Wee of this Iland are set upon the stage, at this time, the eyes of all the Reformed Kirks are upon us, we are after a speciall manner made a spectacle to the World, to Angels, to Men. Our cares must be so to acquite our selves, that we make not our Friends, the followers of Christ, to mourn; and our enemies, the favourers of Antichrist, to triumph and rejoyce: Which that we may do, is, and shall be the prayer of

Edinburgh, Jan.

1643.

Your most loving Brethren and fellow-labourers in the Work of the Lord, the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly.

M. Robert Douglas Moderator.

A. Ker Cler. Commiss. Gen. Ass.

Com-

Commission to *M. Alexander Henderson*

Edinburgh, January 20. 1643.

WE the Commissioners of the late Generall Assembly, having power & commission by all lawful & Ecclesiastick waies, to further this great Work of Union of this Iland in Religion and Kirk-government, to continue our own peace at home, & the common peace betwixt the Nations, to keep correspondence with the Kirk of England, to concur with the Councell & Conservers of peace at home & abroad in all Ecclesiastick wayes, and to send some to present & prosecute their desires & humble advice to the Kings Majestie, and the Parliament of England and Ministrie there, for the furthering & perfecting of so good & great a work: Considering the necessity at this time, of sending some from this Kirk intrusted with commission, to concur with the Commissioners now sent from the Lords, & others of the Commission of Parliament for conserving of peace, to the Kings Majestie & Parliament of England, in all lawful & Ecclesiastick waies to promote these good ends, And having certain knowledge of the faithfulness and abilities of our reverend and loving brother Master *Alexander Henderson* Minister at Edinburgh, Gives therefore unto him by thir presents full power and Commission, our expresse mandate and charge to repaire to the Kingdome of England, and there, with concurrence of the saids Commissioners sent from the Conservers of peace, to present unto the Kings Majesty our humble Petition, & to obtain His Majesties gracious Answer thereunto: and with concurrence foresaid to present unto the Parliament of England our humble Advice & Declaration: and also to deliver to our brethren of the

the Ministerie in that Kirk, our Letter direct to them; And to do all things with concurrence foresaid, or by himself in all lawfull and Ecclesiastick wayes, for prosecuting and promoting our desires to the Kings Majesty, and Parliament, and to our brethren of the Ministry there, for that blessed union of this Iland in Religion and Kirk-government according to the Laws and Constitutions of this Kirk: for continuing and establishing a firm peace at home and betwixt the nations, and for a good correspondence betwixt the Kirks within the same, conforme to the instructions given, or to be given to him thereanent. The said Master *Alexander* alwayes giving particular and timous intelligence to us of his travels, and diligence hereintill, and of the progresse and successe thereof by every occasion, and being comptable to us, and the next Generall Assembly for all his proceedings in the matters generally and particularly hereby committed to his trust.

A. Ker Cler. Commiss. Gen. Ass.

FINIS.



